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Report on proposed UNFPA successor arrangements for agency support costs

SUMMARY

This document has been prepared in response to Governing Council decision 90/26, paragraph 2, which requested the Executive Director to present a detailed proposal concerning support cost arrangements for the United Nations Population Fund "tailored to its specific programme requirements". The Introduction outlines the consultations concerning the UNFPA proposal for successor support cost arrangements which have taken place over the past year; Part I describes the current arrangements; Part II describes the proposed new arrangements, including financial implications; Part III presents a timetable; Part IV presents concluding paragraphs; and Part V presents recommendations.

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-seventh session in 1990, the Governing Council, in decision 90/26, paragraph 2, decided that "support cost arrangements for the United Nations Population Fund should be tailored to its specific programme requirements". The Governing Council requested that the Executive Director "elaborate a detailed proposal for consideration by the Governing Council at its thirty-eighth session, taking into account, where appropriate, the specific circumstances of the Fund and the principles and objectives stated in paragraph 1 of the present decision".

2. Relevant provisions of General Assembly Resolution 44/211 have been fully taken into account in the formulation of a proposal for successor arrangements for agency support costs. The Resolution emphasizes the "need to ensure maximum utilization of national capacity through, in particular, government/national execution of projects, a more programme-oriented approach and regular and timely provision of technical advice and backstopping by agencies at the country level" (para. 25).

3. These emphases have been reflected in UNFPA's proposal, outlined initially in a paper entitled "UNFPA Comments on 'Agency Support Costs: Report of the Expert Group' (DP/1990/9)" (hereinafter referred to as "UNFPA comments on 'Agency Support Costs'"). This paper, which was made available to Council members at the thirty-seventh session, notes that the major premises of the proposal on successor arrangements for agency support costs include support for national execution of projects; implementation of the programme approach to technical co-operation; decentralization of authority; strengthening of technical backstopping capabilities; and accountability of partners in the tripartite relationship of the Government, executing agency and UNFPA.

4. In the latter half of 1990 and early in 1991, UNFPA held a series of consultations about successor arrangements with the major executing agencies and other collaborating organizations in the United Nations system, in the context of UNFPA inter-agency consultative meetings. On 23-24 July 1990, UNFPA convened an ad hoc Inter-Agency Consultative Meeting on Successor Agency Support Cost Arrangements, attended by representatives of the United Nations, including its regional commissions, ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO. At this meeting, the specialized agencies and UNFPA arrived at preliminary agreements on the draft terms of reference for technical support services at various levels and on the relationships between components of the new scheme. A separate meeting was held with the United Nations on 26 July 1990 to discuss specific implications of the proposal.

5. Another ad hoc inter-agency meeting was held on 30 October-5 November 1990. At this meeting, the agencies and UNFPA came to broad understandings on the disciplines to be included in the technical support services and on the institutional arrangements needed to make the proposal operational. Separate bilateral discussions were held with WHO in December 1990 and with the concerned departments of the United Nations, including its regional commissions, on 23 and 31 January and 4 March 1991, to take fully into account matters unique to their institutions.[1]

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[1]The United Nations, including its regional commissions, is still engaged in discussions with UNFPA on the proposal for successor arrangements for agency support costs.

6. On 4-8 February 1991, UNFPA hosted the Inter-Agency Task Force on Successor Arrangements for Agency Support Costs which had been established and started its work during the ad hoc inter-agency meeting of October-November 1990.[2] The Task Force addressed administrative and substantive features of the technical support services arrangements, including a review of its own terms of reference, and made many suggestions for the draft of the final proposal for technical support services, including portions dealing with headquarters and agency regional offices,[3] and the country programme technical support teams as well as the job descriptions of technical support services positions and provisions concerning administrative support and indirect administrative and operational services.[4]

7. These meetings have contributed to the detailed considerations of substantive and financial elements of the new arrangement, helping UNFPA elaborate and refine the broad outlines of its original proposal.

8. This proposal also draws upon the conclusions of an extensive review and assessment of the population field, concluded in 1989, as well as the experience of executing agencies and that of the countries themselves, obtained through exercises such as evaluations, reviews, needs assessments and UNFPA's new programming effort -- the Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) exercise. These efforts have contributed the important perspective of national needs.

9. The following sections outline the current arrangements for agency support and the proposed new arrangements, along with a timetable for implementation. Emphasis is on the broad features and implications of the proposal rather than on financial detail.

I. BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF CURRENT AGENCY SUPPORT COST ARRANGEMENTS

10. Since the early 1970s, UNFPA has extended various types of support to the United Nations (UNDTCD, DIESA and the regional commissions) and to relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations system with a view to assisting them in delivering population assistance to the developing countries and in facilitating the consideration of population dimensions in the countries' development programmes.

11. During the 1980s and at present, technical support has been provided to the countries largely through a network of regional advisers, based in agency regional offices, and interregional advisers and

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[2]The February meeting was attended by FAO, ILO, UNESCO and WHO, but not by the United Nations; see footnote 1.

[3]Throughout this paper, references to headquarters and agency regional offices include for the United Nations, DIESA and UNDTCD in New York and the offices of the regional commissions, and for WHO, Geneva and the regional offices.

[4]UNFPA understands that UNDP's forthcoming Cost-Measurement Study will provide data on the actual indirect costs of administrative and operational services. UNFPA will adopt the percentage formula arrived at in the UNDP study for reimbursing agencies for costs of indirect administrative and operational services.

technical officers, based at agency headquarters, who had distinct technical functions. As of 1 January 1982, following the arrangement adopted by UNDP, pursuant to Governing Council decision 80/44, UNFPA has reimbursed support costs to all United Nations executing agencies at the rate of 13 per cent of annual expenditure for operational activities. The 13 per cent was intended to cover the costs of technical and administrative support services rendered by executing agencies and entities in carrying out operational activities. However, the payment of the 13 per cent did not result in sufficient provision of technical support services; there was a need to supplement these services with a continuation of regional and interregional advisers and technical officers. These advisers have been financed under the Intercountry Programme and their number reached 120 in 1990 (see table 1).

12. Hence, UNFPA's current financial arrangement with the specialized agencies and entities of the United Nations system has the following two elements:

(a) Reimbursement of executing agencies at the rate of 13 per cent for country and intercountry project expenditures;

(b) Support (full payment) for regional and interregional advisers and technical officers under intercountry projects (13 per cent of these costs are also paid, under the provisions mentioned in (a)).

13. Over the years, the functions of the advisers became diluted and gradually shifted from the originally envisaged technical support--that is, the provision of advice to Governments on population issues, provision of substantive backstopping and technical support, assistance in preparing programmes and projects, and assistance in reviewing policies and programmes and identifying training needs--to those more related to project execution and managerial/administrative work.

14. As noted in the report "Agency Support Costs: Report of the Expert Group" (DP/1990/9) 27 December 1989 (hereinafter referred to as Expert Group Report), the current arrangement has not led to the best possible results. The Report identifies various constraints and shortcomings and notes the complaints by executing agencies that the 13 per cent reimbursement does not fully cover the costs of project execution (para. 444); the tendency for technical cooperation activities to be volume-driven, because an agency's income depends upon the level of delivery (para. 446); the observation that current support cost arrangements are "not at all conducive" to promoting national execution; and wide-ranging problems of accountability (chapter VI and paras. 496-497). The Expert Group Report also notes that, for a variety of reasons, "over the past two decades the technical capacity of the system and the support provided to field programmes has gradually eroded" (para. 472).

15. With respect to UNFPA-assisted projects in the field, the Expert Group Report notes that "both technical backstopping and administrative support by agencies were considered poor" (para. 186), concluding that "it is worthwhile to study more closely whether the system of regional and interregional advisers meets the objectives set for them and the standards of effectiveness" (para. 193).

16. Independent evaluations of UNFPA-supported activities have cited many of the difficulties of providing technical support to the field level. Chief among these problems are that there are too few advisers for the scope of the current tasks, with consequent shortcomings in the quality and timeliness of services, and too little coordination.

17. For example, in Comparative Evaluation of UNFPA Support to Population and Development Planning (Global Report) (December 1989), the evaluation mission considers that African Governments' needs for services in the area of integration are outstripping what the current number of regional advisers can provide (p. 51). The mission points out that effective backstopping has been constrained by limited manpower (p. 56) and recommends that UNFPA either increase the number of advisers or provide alternative backstopping (p. 51). In Africa, 35 advisory posts located at seven sites have been providing backstopping for 373 country projects, and many of these advisers have been attempting to backstop more than 15 projects each.

18. Interregional advisers have also been in short supply. In Evaluation of the UNFPA Supported ILO Interregional Programme (April 1989), the evaluation mission finds that "the contribution of the interregional cooperation staff to regional and country activities has been constrained by a dwindling staff-to-project ratio at headquarters and in the regions. The result has been a pre-empting of attention to substantive issues and technical assistance by administrative responsibilities and the need to stand in for regional advisers, especially in Africa" (p. 71).

19. Another contributor to the current shortcomings is the lack of coordination of activities, a problem identified in many of the UNFPA evaluation reports. For example, the Report on the Evaluation of AFRO's Execution of Country MCH/FP Projects and Its Execution of the Regional Advisory Services in Family Health (October 1989) notes that "inconsistent and multiple directions to MCH/FP teams . . . was felt by the mission to hinder the MCH/FP team's ability to follow a consistent approach, to complete agreed upon workplans. . . " (p. 26). A similar point was made with respect to team management in Report on the Evaluation of UNFPA-Supported EMRO Regional Projects and EMRO-Execution of Country Projects (June 1989), in which the mission concludes that "the regional team must assume a more assertive role as the regional focal point for UNFPA-funded country projects" (p. 25).

20. Also, the responsibilities of executing agencies have sometimes overlapped in such fields as information, education and communication (IEC), without proper coordination. Moreover, in their attempts to respond to the increasing number of requests for assistance, advisers in one agency have had little time or opportunity for consultations with advisers in another. There have been no formal mechanisms for substantive intersectoral cross-fertilization, and hence inputs have tended to be fragmented. As noted in the report Evaluation of the Regional Advisory Services in Population Education and Communication in Sub-Saharan Africa of FAO, the ILO and UNESCO 1978-1982 (June 1983), "being separated into different Agencies, the regional advisers are not in a position to function truly as one team. . . . [T]here is a disincentive for [the Agencies to require co-ordination between advisers of the different Agencies] since the Agencies are actually competing for scarce UNFPA resources" (p. 19). The report concludes that the regional advisers would be more effective if they were all on one team, with one supervisor (p. 23).

21. Some of the problems of quality and timeliness stem from recruitment practices in some agencies, which have led to delayed filling of posts or poor selections, as noted in "UNFPA comments on 'Agency Support Costs'" (para. 9). In addition, the agendas and work programmes of the executing agencies have sometimes taken precedence over implementation of UNFPA-assisted projects and programmes. One report (Evaluation of the Regional Advisory Services in Population Education and Communication in Sub-Saharan Africa of FAO, the ILO and UNESCO 1978-1982 (June 1983) notes "the basic underlying problem of the Agencies' tending to consider the regional advisers strictly as their own staff" (p. 19).

22. For all these reasons, among others, there is a great need for a more coherent as well as a more cost-effective system of technical support in population.

23. In June 1990, the Governing Council adopted decision 90/26, which, inter alia, sets forth the principles that are to govern successor arrangements for the United Nations Development Programme and UNFPA. The Governing Council noted, however, that UNFPA has distinct technical and operational requirements and for that reason should have support cost arrangements that are tailored to its specific programme requirements. The proposed new arrangement discussed below has been developed to meet those programme requirements and, also, to overcome or avoid some of the constraints and shortcomings described above.

II. SUBSTANTIVE FEATURES OF PROPOSED NEW ARRANGEMENT

A. Purposes and rationale

24. The UNFPA proposal is intended to reinforce its partnership with other United Nations entities and the specialized agencies so that countries can avail themselves of the full range of technical support and experience of the United Nations system, which can bring a unique network to bear on supporting population activities at all levels, country and intercountry. The new arrangement is also intended to strengthen technical services provided in support of country programmes and projects and to facilitate and continue efforts to bring about the integration of population dimensions into all facets of the activities of United Nations entities and agencies. Based on the principle of cost-sharing, the new arrangement aims at fostering "cost-efficiency, enhanced quality, cost-transparency and effectiveness" (Governing Council decision 90/26, para. 1, f). Today, as countries have ever more differentiated technical assistance requirements, they need easier and faster access to the vastly increased "accumulated knowledge and experience of the United Nations system" (Expert Group Report, para. 470). Through the arrangements described below, UNFPA hopes to contribute an efficient, effective and coherent marshalling of many sources of experience and expertise to serve the diverse needs of developing countries.

25. The technical services in the new arrangement are aimed at making technical knowledge, analysis and research in population within the United Nations system fully available to countries; facilitating an integrated and coordinated approach to population; creating a closer link between research and operational activities; and continuing to promote greater reliance on national expertise and institutions, governmental and non-governmental, and government execution. Although some countries have now developed domestic sources of technical expertise in population, the population field is both relatively new and expanding, and expertise is scarce. Hence, in-country expertise in many developing countries will benefit by being reinforced and supplemented with high-quality, short-term outside technical resources that can be made available in a timely manner.

26. Under the new arrangement, the advisory skills sought will be those of broad programme knowledge, analytic abilities and training skills as well as expertise in population disciplines. The new arrangement will also draw upon technical inputs from the totality of each agency's expertise and will foster greater concentration on the channelling of state-of-the-art knowledge to the countries. The Expert Group Report notes that, as Governments move towards assuming ever greater responsibility for programme and project management, the agencies will still need to provide short-term high-quality technical expertise, such

as sectoral analyses and syntheses of lessons from their specific areas of expertise in support of programmes (Expert Group Report, para. 479, d, iii).

27. Among other measures to enhance quality, the new arrangement for technical services will permit linkages across disciplines and promote complementarity of specializations. It is also aimed at greater flexibility, so that Governments will have access to the array of agency expertise regardless of whether an agency is executing a project. Moreover, because the arrangement rests on close coordination and communication, countries will receive more timely responses to their requests than they have heretofore.

28. By ensuring better coordination of the United Nations system inputs for technical cooperation in population, UNFPA can assist Governments in managing and using the limited resources available to countries, and prevent the fragmentation and lack of coherence in technical inputs that have often marked past technical assistance to countries. Through such collaboration, country priorities in population can be identified, and consistent and complementary activities fostered. The new arrangement may also offer the potential for realizing some savings in the overall costs of providing technical services to countries by reducing the need for a variety of ad hoc arrangements.

B. Structure

29. In place of the current 13 per cent overhead practices, UNFPA proposes the adoption of a new arrangement with two basic components:

(a) Technical support for country programmes and projects;

(b) A partial reimbursement, based upon an agreed formula, of indirect administrative and operational services incurred at headquarters and regional offices for support of country activities.

30. For country programmes and projects, there will be three sources of technical support: national expertise available in the country; teams of experts in various population disciplines that are stationed in the region to supplement national expertise; and a small number of specialists and coordinators at agency headquarters and regional offices, who will backstop the team and make the latest technical knowledge available. The direct technical support costs for projects, such as project preparation and appraisals, specific consultancies and project monitoring visits, will be charged to the projects.

1. Technical support services for country programmes and projects

National expertise

31. As noted in the Expert Group Report, UNFPA has pioneered in the Government execution of projects, and in 1990, 21.4 per cent of UNFPA-supported projects were being executed by the Governments. In line with General Assembly Resolution 44/211, calling for the adoption of national execution as the ultimate modality of United Nations operational activities, UNFPA will continue its efforts to identify and develop national expertise and promote greater use of national experts and institutions, both governmental and non-governmental. Thus, technical support will first be sought in national expertise available in the country. This technical resource should also be exploited for wider use in the region. One of the functions

of the proposed teams stationed in the regions/sub-regions will be that of identifying and mobilizing national and regional expertise.

Country programme technical support teams

32. The teams of experts, called "country programme technical support teams", will be drawn from United Nations agencies and entities, UNFPA and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including regional institutions. They will be recruited by the individual agencies and entities. The teams will include, and be coordinated by, a UNFPA-appointed team leader. In addition to the disciplines represented on the teams and at headquarters (see below), short-term consultancies, charged to project costs, can be arranged for specializations not covered by the team members or by agency headquarters specialists.

33. The country programme technical support teams will provide countries in the region, upon requests of the Governments, with a broad range of technical services at all stages of the programming cycle, including formulating programmes and projects; providing technical support to project/programme implementation and monitoring; identifying and mobilizing national and regional technical resources; and developing strategies for country population programmes. Their functions will be technical rather than managerial. They will seek to provide countries with state-of-the-art substantive knowledge and skills, render ad hoc advisory services, and identify and obtain specialist technical support inputs from agencies' headquarters and regional offices to country programmes/projects. They will also assist in organizing or conducting training activities, based on the identified need. The teams will be responsible for providing these technical support services to all projects, including those executed by Governments and other bodies.

Headquarters/regional offices

34. To ensure that the teams can contribute the most up-to-date and highest quality of information and services to countries seeking assistance, the teams will be backstopped by a small number of specialists/coordinators at the headquarters and regional offices of the United Nations, including its regional commissions, and the United Nations specialized agencies. The specialists/coordinators' functions in relation to the teams will include assembling and providing state-of-the-art information and referral services; technical support and backstopping in the design of comprehensive population policies, strategies and programmes; technical input on incorporating demographic variables and concerns into development planning; preparation of country profiles; training and orientation seminars, with opportunities for exchanges of information about population programmes among regions; and support in organizing and conducting intercountry training programmes, including preparation of training materials. Because of the decentralized structure of WHO, specialists will be needed at regional offices to undertake some of the headquarters functions. At the United Nations regional commissions, coordinators will be needed to act as a link between various population-related offices and the teams.

35. These specialists/coordinators at headquarters and regional offices will also play an advocacy role in population within the mandate of the agency; integrate population variables into all relevant portions of the agency's work programme, including major conferences; undertake sectoral analyses and identify programme needs, including the provision of policy advice in population to the agency's decision-making bodies; take part in country programme/sector reviews; conduct research and training (mainly under the intercountry programme); and undertake evaluation of programmes and projects. These specialists/ coordinators will also assist, as required, in the execution of intercountry and country projects. However,

their primary focus will be on backstopping the teams in their assistance to countries, by channelling the full array of expertise in their agencies. The agencies themselves will increasingly assume the role of centres of excellence.

Role of the team leader

36. To deliver better quality and more timely technical assistance to countries, UNFPA will strengthen coordination of all aspects of technical support in population, in line with General Assembly Resolution 44/211 as well as with the UNFPA mandate "to play a leading role in the United Nations system in promoting population programmes and to co-ordinate projects supported by the Fund" (ECOSOC resolution 1763 (LIV)). One of the top priorities of the teams will be to promote coordinated programme support to countries. In order to do so, as identified in many evaluation reports (see paras. 19 and 20), there is a need for someone to coordinate the work of team members so that they can function effectively as one team and to ensure well-prepared workplans. To avoid affiliation with any particular agency, and in view of the coordination role that is part of the UNFPA mandate, this person should be recruited by UNFPA.

37. At the country level, management of technical support in population will remain the responsibility of the UNFPA Country Director/UNFPA Representative, in close consultation with the United Nations Resident Coordinator, who coordinates the country's overall technical cooperation programme.

38. The team leader will be responsible for preparing annual workplans jointly with the concerned agencies, based on the countries' needs for technical assistance. Requests for technical support services from the countries will be made through UNFPA Country Directors/UNFPA Representatives and agency representatives, where applicable. The team leader, working under the overall supervision of the respective geographical divisions of UNFPA headquarters, in consultation with the Technical and Evaluation Division and the agencies, will also be responsible for ensuring the management and implementation of the workplan agreed upon by the agencies and UNFPA. The team leader will also deal with ad hoc requests for technical backstopping or advisory services by Governments, UNFPA Country Directors/UNFPA Representatives and agency representatives, ensuring sufficient flexibility to accommodate changes in country requests.

Monitoring and evaluation

39. The overall monitoring of the technical support services will be done by the Inter-Agency Task Force. The Task Force will provide advice on any needed improvements in quality and timeliness and on measures to ensure harmonization and complementarity of activities.

40. The new arrangement will be evaluated jointly by UNFPA and the agencies after three years of implementation.

Distribution of technical support services

41. Overall. Based on discussions with the agencies and various offices responsible for country operations in each region and a close study and review of the requirements by UNFPA, the proposed

arrangement will include a total of 166 experts[5]: 120 on the country programme technical support teams, 8 at agency regional offices and 38 at agency headquarters. Of 120 experts in the country programme support teams, 14 will be recruited from NGOs and 3 from a regional establishment. Experts will be placed according to a phase-in schedule.

42. In comparison with the current arrangement, the new one places more emphasis, in terms of the number of experts, on Africa and the Arab States--areas where technical knowledge is less readily available in the countries and the region than it is in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. By sector, there would be about the same proportion of experts/specialists in the field of MCH/FP; proportionately more experts/specialists in the fields of formulation, evaluation and implementation of population policies and programmes, and women, population and development; and proportionately fewer in the fields of data collection, population dynamics and IEC. (See tables 1 and 2.)

43. Within all programme areas, activities to increase women's participation and benefits from programmes and projects will continue to be an important concern of the Fund. Within programmes and projects, related aims are to improve the role and status of women by providing them with means of social and economic self-determination, including access to education, skills, employment, health care and family planning, opportunities for political participation and the right to make decisions affecting their lives. Another important concern that cuts across all the major fields of activity is sociocultural research. Furthermore, the teams and the specialists at headquarters would be expected to carry out their functions consonant with other programmatic emphases of the Fund, such as population and the environment and technical cooperation among developing countries.

44. The proposed size and composition of the teams have been determined on the basis of previous experience with the regional advisory services, the current and anticipated numbers of projects in the substantive areas that would require backstopping, available national capacities in the substantive sectors and emerging population and development needs.

45. Africa. In Africa, the largest region in terms of the number of UNFPA-supported country projects, the capacity to implement population programmes is still rather limited because of institutional, financial and personnel constraints. The current network of 35 advisory posts located at seven sites, which evolved at a time when UNFPA was supporting 238 country projects with annual expenditures of approximately $16 million, is no longer sufficient as the number of projects approaches 400, with expenditures of approximately $42 million. It will fall even shorter of requirements as country project ceilings increase during the 1992-1995 period. In an effort to address the deficiencies in the present arrangement--principally the insufficient availability of technical services owing to the tremendous work-load of advisers and secondarily the quality of services provided by them--UNFPA foresees a need for 53 experts stationed in three sub-regional locations. Of these 53, there would be 12 experts in the MCH/FP sector; 15 experts in the IEC sector; 12 experts in basic data collection and population dynamics; 9 experts in population policy formulation, evaluation and implementation; and 2 experts in women, population and development; plus 3 team leaders. (See table 2.)

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[5]This total reflects the number to be in place by the fourth year of implementation. The total for the four-year period will be 624 person-years.

46. Within the MCH/FP area, in addition to general analytical capabilities, particular strengths in management, management information and logistics systems, training and operations research will be desired qualities in team members. In IEC, a broad background in population education and communication will be a prerequisite. Specialists in formal and non-formal sub-sectors will be represented, and particular experience in IEC planning/management, curriculum and materials development and research and evaluation will be required. In basic data collection and population dynamics, experts will be expected to have strong general knowledge of all aspects of census, vital statistics and survey procedures. Additional special expertise that will be sought among team members will include design, cartography, sampling and data analysis. Finally, regarding women, population and development, experts will be expected to train other team members so they can become effective proponents of women's concerns. They are also expected to have expertise in the design and management of income-generating activities and IEC programmes for women.

47. Arab States and Europe. In the Arab States and Europe region, some of the major constraints to implementing population programmes have been found to be the shortage of data, and the lack of analysis of these data, on which Governments can formulate population policies; weak support for population issues in the countries; poor or limited family planning facilities; lack of family planning information; low status of women; and sociocultural considerations. Currently, there are 10 regional advisers who provide technical backstopping to about 185 country projects, resulting in heavy workloads for these advisers. In the coming years, several new country programmes are to be implemented and the need for technical services is expected to increase further. UNFPA, therefore, proposes 16 experts, covering the needed sectors, to be stationed in the Arab region to backstop some 250 projects. There would be 5 experts in the MCH/FP sector, including management information systems and sociocultural aspects of strengthening family planning services; 5 experts in population education (in- and out-of-school) and communication; 3 experts in data collection and analysis and also to assist Governments preparing or conducting a census, in which national capability is insufficient to carry out such activities as sampling and data processing; 1 expert in integration of demographic variables in policy planning, to reflect the need for increased awareness of the importance of population policies; 1 expert in women, population and development; plus 1 team leader. (See table 2.) In the Europe region, UNFPA proposes not to establish a team but instead to place 1 technical officer at the WHO regional office for Europe in the area of MCH/FP to provide the needed backstopping services for country as well as intercountry activities in this area.

48. Asia and the Pacific. The Asia and the Pacific region is extremely diverse, comprising large nations with populations of more than 100 million and small islands with less than 500,000. The entire region can be subdivided into three sub-regions based on the needs of the countries, their present development stage and their cultural differences and similarities. Currently, UNFPA is supporting 29 advisers in the region to backstop about 330 country projects. Given the increasing trend towards national execution and the growing size and number of projects, UNFPA proposes to fund 38 experts in the region, to be stationed in three sub-regional locations. Of these 38, there would be 5 experts in the MCH/FP sector with special skills in management; 11 experts in IEC, with specializations in formal and non-formal sectors as well as documentation and audio-visual techniques; 5 experts in basic data collection and population dynamics; 12 experts in population policy formulation, evaluation and implementation; 2 experts in women, population and development; and 3 team leaders. (See table 2.) The composition of the teams reflects, inter alia, the findings of a study recently undertaken by UNFPA in South Asia that showed that while these Governments have longstanding family planning programmes and have attained a certain level of population awareness, their programmes have had limited impact because, among other reasons,

population messages have not reached the public as effectively as expected. Thus, a closer link between IEC and MCH/FP and the strengthening of the IEC element in MCH/FP programmes will be needed.

49. Latin America and the Caribbean. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNFPA proposes to fund 12 experts. To better respond to the needs of the country programmes, advisory services need to be expanded in areas such as family planning and IEC, whereas comparatively less emphasis will be given to areas such as data collection and population dynamics.

50. The team would include 3 experts in MCH/FP; 3 experts in IEC; 1 expert in demographic analysis; 1 expert in population and development; 1 expert in the use of sociocultural research, 1 expert in the integration of gender issues; 1 expert in management; and the team leader. (See table 2.) In MCH/FP, more emphasis would be given to reproductive health through family planning and to family planning training programmes through improved training methodologies and evaluation and feedback mechanisms for better quality care and increased efficiency and effectiveness. Improved outreach of family planning services would be sought also through the provision of advisory services in channels supplementing those provided by the traditional public health system. The IEC sector expertise would address formal as well as out-of-school population education and communication programming. Emphasis would be placed on advice for the development of appropriate IEC strategies and activities targeted to priority audiences, for example, adolescents, men and rural women. Sociocultural research expertise is required to strengthen programming by ensuring that operational activities take into account the particular characteristics of target audiences. This assistance would be of particular benefit to MCH/FP and IEC programmes (in table 2, this post appears under MCH/FP.) Technical assistance in demographic analysis and population policies is still needed in a number of countries of the region. In regard to women, population and development, it is necessary to provide assistance to include gender issues at the practical project level and to advise on training in gender analysis. As to management, a relatively neglected field, the need cuts across all programme areas.

51. Agency headquarters and regional offices. As the agencies will increasingly play a role as centres of excellence in the area of their specializations, the function of the specialists to be placed in the agency headquarters and some regional offices will be technical. Acting as a link between the field and headquarters, these specialists will be responsible primarily for providing the teams with the latest technical knowledge and special expertise not available in regions as well as with analytical and research work in the main sectors of relevance to population.

52. In the MCH/FP sector, UNFPA proposes to fund 5 specialists at WHO headquarters. They will be specialized in MCH/FP programme planning and management, management information systems and logistics management, training and health education in MCH/FP programmes. In addition, 6 specialists in MCH/FP will serve in WHO regional offices.

53. In the IEC sector, which is closely tied to the other sectors and especially to MCH/FP, UNFPA proposes to fund 10 specialists: 4 in population education and communication at UNESCO headquarters; 3 in programme development, research and evaluation, and training at ILO headquarters; and 3 in population education and communication at FAO headquarters. These specialists are to provide the knowledge that would help countries create and maintain awareness of the implications of population growth, distribution and structure for social and economic development as well as to promote IEC efforts in support of MCH/FP, making sure that such efforts respond to the needs of individuals and couples.

54. In population data collection and population dynamics, UNFPA proposes to fund 9 specialists at the United Nations headquarters. Increasing emphasis will be given to population-related data for analyses and research, particularly research related to the formulation of population policies and programmes. UNFPA also emphasizes the value of collecting and analysing data on such groups as women, youth and the elderly, as well as specific socio-economic groups, for research and for monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies and programmes. The areas of specialization would include census, vital statistics, sampling, data processing, national household survey capability, population and development statistics, demographic analysis and research, demographic training and demographic impact of family planning.

55. In population policy formulation, evaluation and implementation, UNFPA proposes to fund 9 specialists to promote an understanding of the central role of population in development at the country level. Although increasing numbers of countries have adopted population policies over the past decades, many have not, and there is still an urgent need to institutionalize efforts and integrate population variables into the context and content of development planning. Of the 9 specialists, 3 would be at ILO headquarters (population, human resources development planning and policy; population distribution, migration and urbanization; and development and use of training materials in population and development planning), 2 at FAO headquarters (population and rural development, and environment), and 2 each at UNESCO headquarters (social science) and the United Nations (population and development; and population policy).

56. In addition to the above, UNFPA would fund 2 specialists in the area of women, population and development at FAO and ILO headquarters; 1 population specialist to integrate population concerns into fisheries and forestry programmes at FAO headquarters; and 1 coordinator each at ILO headquarters and the United Nations and 2 coordinators at the regional commissions to ensure effective linkages and complementarity among the relevant offices within the agencies/commissions and between the agencies/commissions and the teams.

57. Adhering to the partnership principle, agencies are expected to provide the following services from their own resources and, where relevant, allow UNFPA full access to them:

(a) Research on development issues relevant to the sector;
(b) Supply of information and technical advice;
(c) Reference services;
(d) Participation in technical cooperation meetings;
(e) Public information on technical cooperation activities;
(f) Budgetary accounting and reporting work; and
(g) Thematic or programmatic evaluations.

2. Administrative and operational services

58. Administrative and operational services comprise the services at headquarters and regional level that are necessary for the implementation of country activities. These services include recruitment and placement of personnel, procurement of equipment, placement and administration of fellowships, budget and finance, general administration, supplies, the portion of data processing applicable to administration, etc. The technical posts at agency headquarters currently financed under the 13 per cent agency support costs

will not become part of this component but will either be included in the technical support services component, if their functions are purely technical, or be absorbed in the regular agency budget.

59. In a spirit of partnership and cost-sharing, UNFPA will reimburse 50 per cent of these administrative and operational costs to the agencies. The formula to be applied to determine the level of reimbursement will be decided when the Cost-Measurement Study, undertaken by UNDP jointly with the agencies, becomes available in the last quarter of 1991.

60. Reimbursement of administrative and operational services, however, will not exceed 50 per cent of the percentage arrived at under a generally acceptable and uniform cost measurement system. The percentage for administrative support that was determined in the latest available cost measurement, as outlined in a special Consultative Committee on Administrative Question report (DP/77/Add. 1 of 22 October 1974) and referred to by the Expert Group in their report, was 11.6 per cent. Hence, UNFPA has used half that figure--6 per cent--in the estimates of such costs shown below; the other half would be paid by the agencies in line with the cost-sharing nature of the arrangement. This rate will be adjusted based on the result of the Study in due course.

C. Financial implications of proposed new arrangement

1. Overall

61. The proposed new arrangement is estimated to cost $123 million over the 1992-1995 period. (See table 3.) This includes the costs of technical support services, which are estimated at $89.4 million, and a partial reimbursement for the costs of indirect administrative and operational services rendered by executing agencies and entities in carrying out country activities, which is estimated at $33.6 million. Direct technical costs at the project level will be part of the project budgets.

62. A comparison of the average annual costs of the new arrangement ($30.8 million) with the costs in 1990 of the current arrangement ($28.6 million) indicates a total increase that is no more than the expected increase caused by inflation. (See table 3.) Of the total costs, the reimbursement to executing agencies for their administrative and operational services will be reduced from $14.7 million (1990) to $8.4 million (annual average), and technical support costs will be increased from $13.9 million (1990 year-end allocation) to $22.4 million (annual average). The new arrangement consolidates technical support services previously rendered by various sources and means into one system.

63. The proportion of the technical support services costs to the total programmable resources will be 13.0 per cent, on average, over the four-year period. This rate compares favourably with the equivalent rate of the present agency support costs plus regional and interregional advisers and related administrative costs, which was 15.6 per cent in 1990. (See table 3.)

2. Cost components of technical support services

64. The costs of technical support services include technical support professionals (country programme support team members and leaders, and specialists/coordinators at agency headquarters and regional offices), administrative support personnel (secretaries and/or administrative assistants) and other related

administrative costs (travel, purchase and maintenance of equipment, premises rental, reports and printing, communication and miscellaneous costs). Experts will be placed according to a phasing-in placement schedule over a three-year period. All technical support posts are project posts. All secretaries and administrative assistants are local personnel. The breakdown of these costs by region and headquarters/regional office is provided in table 4.

65. The costs directly related to projects, such as participation in tripartite project review meetings, consultancies specific to implementation of certain projects, project preparation, project appraisals, project monitoring visits and project evaluation, will be charged to the respective country project budgets.

3. Administrative and operational services

66. Reimbursement by UNFPA of the costs of indirect administrative and operational services, as described in paragraph 58, has been estimated assuming a rate of 6 per cent of the anticipated expenditure of UNFPA-funded country projects to be executed by the agencies/entities. If UNDP arrives at a different formula in the Cost-Measurement Study it is currently undertaking, UNFPA will adopt that formula for reimbursement.

III. TIMETABLE

67. UNFPA proposes that the new arrangement be made effective for five years, with an evaluation after three years. This would apply to all regions and all UNFPA-supported programme/project activities. The new arrangement would begin on 1 January 1992, with a phasing-in of activities throughout 1992-1994. During the balance of 1991, the Task Force will be addressing details of the transitional period.

IV. CONCLUSION

68. The arrangement proposed above, though significantly different from the current system of technical support, has been studied carefully for its applicability as well as its relevance to the needs of developing countries for technical assistance in the field of population. It meets the specific requirements of UNFPA and responds to the principles and objectives set forth in para. 1 of Governing Council decision 90/26. Implementation of the proposal will result in coverage of a broad range of support services, all aimed at enhancing national capability and promoting national execution. The proposal clearly distinguishes technical support from administrative support. Finally, it provides for an equitable sharing of costs as well as improved accountability concerning performance of the support function.

69. While UNFPA fully acknowledges the difficulties involved in the implementation of the new arrangement, it firmly believes that these changes are necessary if the United Nations system is to become more effective in the provision of higher quality and timelier technical assistance in population, and they are imperative if countries are to achieve self-reliance in undertaking population activities.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

70. The Executive Director recommends that the Governing Council:

(a) Endorse the proposed successor arrangements for agency support costs for the five-year period 1992-1996;

(b) Authorize the Executive Director to commit an amount of $123 million over the four-year period 1992-1995;

(c) Further authorize the Executive Director to allocate the funds and to make appropriate arrangements with executing agencies and entities.

Table 1. Current (1990) regional and interregional advisers, by sector

SECTOR	REGIONAL ADVISERS (agency field offices)					INTERREGIONAL ADVISERS (agency headquarters)						Total
	Africa	Arab States[a]	Asia & Pacific	Latin Amer. & Carib.	Sub-Total	FAO	ILO	UNESCO	UN	WHO	Sub-Total	
Basic Data Collection and Population Dynamics	13	2	7	5	27	-	-	-	7	-	7	34
Population Policy Formulation, Evaluation and Implementation[c]	4	-	7	2	13	1	4[b]	1	1	-	7	20
Maternal and Child Health and Family Planning	7	3	6	3	19	-	-	-	-	8	8	27
Information, Education and Communication	11	5	8	2	26	4	2	6	-	-	12	38
Women	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Total	35	10	29	12	86	5	6	7	8	8	34	120

NOTES:

[a] Arab States and Europe.
[b] Rounded up from 3.5 person years.
[c] This category includes the integration of population variables into development planning.

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Table 2. Proposed technical support professionals, by sector

SECTOR	COUNTRY PROGRAMME TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAMS					AGENCY HEADQUARTERS						REGIONAL OFFICES			
	Africa	Arab States[a]	Asia & Pacific	Latin Amer. & Carib.	Sub-Total	FAO	ILO	UNESCO	UN[b]	WHO	Sub-Total	UN Reg. Comm.	WHO	Sub-Total	Total
Basic Data Collection and Population Dynamics	12	3	5	1	21	-	-	-	9	-	9	-	-	-	30
Population Policy Formulation, Evaluation and Implementation[c]	9	1	12	1	23	2	3	2	2	-	9	-	-	-	32
Maternal and Child Health and Family Planning	12	6	5	4	27	-	-	-	-	5	5	-	6	6	38
Information, Education and Communication	15	5	11	3	34	3	3	4	-	-	10	-	-	-	44
Women	2	1	2	1	6	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	8
Other[d]	3	1	3	2	9	1	1	-	1	-	3	2	-	2	14
Total	53	17	38	12	120	7	8	6	12	5	38	2	6	8	166[e]

NOTES:

[a] Arab States and Europe.
[b] DIESA and UNDTCD in New York.
[c] This category includes the integration of population variables into development planning.
[d] The "other" category includes the team leaders; coordinators at headquarters and the regional commissions; and other multi-sectoral experts, such as an FAO position in population in Fisheries and Forestry, and an NGO position in management in Latin America and the Caribbean.
[e] This total reflects the number of technical support professionals to be placed by 1995. Positions will be phased in during 1992-1994.

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Table 3. Costs of current and proposed arrangements

(in US million dollars)

	Current	Proposed					
	1990	1992 est.	1993 est.	1994 est.	1995 est.	1992-95	Annual Average
Administrative and operational services*	14.7	7.0	7.9	8.9	9.8	33.6	8.4
Costs of technical support services	13.9[b]	20.1	21.4	23.0	24.9	89.4	22.4
Total (A)	28.6	27.1	29.3	31.9	34.7	123.0	30.8
Programmable resources [c](B)	183.7	198.5	222.4	251.0	277.0	948.9	237.2
(A) as percentage of (B)	15.6%	13.7%	13.2%	12.7%	12.5%	13.0%	13.0%

NOTES:

* Reimbursement of 13 per cent to the UN executing agencies, overhead payments to NGOs and charges assessed by UNFPA for Government-executed projects for 1990; and 6 per cent (tentative) for administrative and operational services (AOS) for 1992-1995.

[b] Estimate based on 1990 year-end allocation.

[c] For comparability with 1992-1995 figures, programme expenditures for 1990 in this table include programme expenditures ($169.0 million) as well as agency support costs ($14.7 million), which came from a source other than programme funds.

Table 4. Breadown of costs of technical support services over 1992-1995, by region

(in US million dollars)

	Africa	Arab States/ Europe	Asia/Pacific	Latin America/ Caribbean	HQs[a]	Total
Technical support services	24.6	10.2	20.5	8.0	26.1	89.4
	(27.5%)	(11.4%)	(22.9%)	(8.9%)	(29.2%)	(100.0%)[b]

NOTES:

[a] United Nations and specialized agency headquarters and regional offices (WHO, ECA and ESCAP).

[b] Percentages add to less than 100.0% due to rounding.